

Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee

10 January 2024 – At a meeting of the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee held at 10.30 am at County Hall, Chichester, PO19 1RQ.

Present: Cllr Wall (Chairman)

Cllr Cooper	Cllr O'Kelly, Arrived at	Cllr Khan
Cllr Ali	10.34	Cllr Long
Cllr Atkins	Cllr Pudaloff	Cllr McGregor
Cllr Dunn	Cllr Walsh	Zoey Harries
Cllr Forbes	Cllr Bevis	
	Cllr Glynn-Davies	

Apologies were received from Cllr Johnson, Cllr Nagel, Cllr Patel, Cllr Hastain and Cllr Peacock

Absent:

Also in attendance: Cllr A Jupp and Cllr Lanzer

32. Declarations of Interest

32.1 None.

33. Urgent Matters

33.1 The Committee discussed the decision by Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust to temporarily reduce the Memory Assessment and dementia services provided in West Sussex from January 2024 until the end of March 2024 and to temporarily reduce the number of dementia beds it currently provides in Sussex from 50 to 40.

33.2 The Committee learned that further developments in the NHS since it discussed winter preparedness in November 2023 meant that some providers have had to temporarily reduce services to address safety across urgent care services.

33.3 The Council has asked for more warning of similar decisions in the future and will be monitoring the impact on social care services which benefit from knowing the diagnosis of its customers.

33.4 The Committee raised concerns around the following: -

- The effect this will have on those with dementia and their families/carers
- The knock-on effect on adult social care
- How the backlog this will create will be cleared
- What alternative services are being provided

- How partner organisations and the voluntary sector are filling the gaps caused by this decision
- Whether the Trust has carried out a risk assessment of its decision

33.5 Resolved – that the Chairman writes a letter to Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust and NHS Sussex raising specific concerns on the recent decision concerning Memory Assessment and dementia services, and request that a member of the Trust attends the Business Planning Group meeting on 7 February to address these concerns.

34. Minutes of the last meeting of the Committee

34.1 Resolved – that the minutes of the meeting held on 22 November 2023 are approved as a correct record and are signed by the Chairman.

35. Responses to Recommendations

35.1 The Committee considered the responses to recommendations.

35.2 Resolved – that the Committee requests that: -

- i. It receives the different discharge pathways and timescales for each of the hospitals in West Sussex
- ii. A further Key Performance Indicator on prevalence of smoking in children and young people be extended to include vaping

36. Access to Dentistry

36.1 The Committee considered a report by NHS Sussex (copy appended to the signed minutes).

36.2 NHS Sussex provided an update on the actions taken to fully understand the barriers to NHS dental access and activities taken to enhance routine and urgent care dental access for people in West Sussex.

36.3 Further updates were provided by the Chair of West Sussex Local Dental Committee and a former NHS dentist in West Sussex. The Local Dental Committee welcomed the engagement with the Integrated Care Board to innovate and work collaboratively in the confines of a national contract. They were attempting to create more capacity in the system by not wasting time and resources on initiatives that don't work.

36.4 The Committee felt that: -

- the national NHS dental contract was the cause of many of the problems facing NHS dentistry and needed to be reviewed
- worsening dental health leads to wider health problems

- there should have been further support during the transition of delegated responsibility between NHS England to the Integrated Care Boards
- the business model of dentistry needed to be looked at
- if people had to pay for private treatment they might not be able to afford other essentials

36.5 Summary of responses to members' questions and comments: -

- Actions to address NHS dental access issues in Arun, Chichester and Horsham due to the high number of Units of Dental Activity (UDAs) lost due to contract hand backs have been put in place including the rapid commissioning of 33,843 permanent UDAs in Adur, Arun and Worthing. Dental providers in these areas submitted an Expression of Interest to deliver a total of 10,000 UDAs. Further work is underway to increase UDA activity in these areas, this includes supporting existing NHS dental providers to over-perform by up to 10% of their contracted UDAs
- NHS Sussex continues to work with local authority public health teams who are responsible for oral health promotion
- Primary care dentists are not NHS employees and act as self-employed providers
- All NHS dental services are open to anyone from any area and people can receive care in any practice able to offer them an appointment
- Work is taking place to address dental access for patients with the highest clinical need
- NHS Sussex recognises the barriers to accessing NHS dental services for people from protected characteristic groups
- NHS Sussex has developed pilot schemes to enhance dental access for people with protected characteristics and/or clinically vulnerable groups which includes, cancer patients, children looked after and care home residents who require specific outreach facilities not provided by high street dental practices
- NHS Sussex is working on a dental pathway for children looked after, partners include a Paediatric Dental Consultant and Public Health dental consultants
- New NHS Mandatory Dental Service contracts have been commissioned in areas of greatest need where an NHS dentist has the capacity and workforce to increase dental activity
- NHS Sussex continues to explore options with the dental profession to increase dental activity to utilise the full dental budget where there is NHS dental capacity and workforce to do so
- The British Dental Association recommends £35 per UDA to stabilise the situation
- There was concern that NHS dentistry was being allowed to fail and be replaced by a private treatment system and that this model would then be replicated in primary care
- A former NHS dentist thought that the system was at the end of a crisis and could collapse and that starting a new system would not be cost effective

- The Local Dental Committee offered to work with NHS Sussex over the contract value of UDAs to encourage take up of contracts. This work is dependent on further national guidance on UDA rates
- There is a need to look at support mechanisms for local practitioners as they are being asked to deliver care that they may not be confident, competent or qualified to do within a restrained budget
- The Committee queried whether the Council considered dentistry as a disability related expense for those on the minimum income guarantee
- It was questioned whether the Government's Reform Plan would help the majority of people or just those in the worst situation

36.6 Resolved – that the Committee

- Should lobby strongly through West Sussex MPs and directly to the Secretary of State for Health about the renegotiation nationally of the dental contract and Units of Dental Activity rate highlighting its urgency including realistic value, including a request for MPs to facilitate a meeting with the relevant government minister
- Asks that action programmes for Arun, Chichester and Horsham are developed to address issues in lack of NHS dentists in those areas
- Requests work to be undertaken to ensure positive dialogue between NHS and local dentists and better lines of communication
- Asks NHS Sussex to consider support mechanisms for local practitioners to deliver levels of care and
- To consider whether the business model for dentists is sustainable in West Sussex
- Wishes to assess the Government's Reform Plan on dentistry when published
- Asks its Business Planning Group to assess when dentistry should return to the Committee
- Asks Adult Social Care whether people on the minimum income guarantee can claim disability related expense for dental treatment

37. Sussex Health and Care People Plan

37.1 The Committee considered a report by NHS Sussex (copy appended to the signed minutes).

37.2 Summary of responses to members' questions and comments: -

- It was felt that the Plan was aspirational without measurable outcomes
- The Plan takes a system-wide approach and there are a number of related programmes outside of the Plan
- Actions are measured through the People Delivery Board and an Implementation Plan
- It was difficult to cover everything in the Plan, such as pensions, secure contracts, recruitment and retention (which is dealt with on a local basis) and industrial action (as this is hoped to be a short-term situation) and concentrates on what could be done in the next three to five years with the resources available

- The workforce has increased to about 40,000 (not taking into account unpaid workers) and has pushed some providers over their financial envelope
- Although the number of vacancies in social care is greater in West Sussex due to a higher number of posts, the percentage rate is about the same as neighbouring authorities – the Council is working with providers to fill vacancies
- NHS Sussex always bids for funding on offer, but is not always successful as in the case regarding funding to help make reasonable adjustments for staff with disabilities
- Reasonable adjustments are part of the Workforce Retention Plan
- The voluntary sector has said it can do more to help and be part of integrated community teams
- The right level of support and benefits need to be offered to women, as they make up 80% of the workforce, in order to retain them

37.3 Resolved – that the Committee asks NHS Sussex to: -

- Share the Implementation Plan with the Committee
- Share the overarching Implementation Plan that contains more information on time frames, actions and metrics which are designed around internal, detailed reporting
- Provide year on year staffing figures
- Share its Workforce Retention Plan with the Committee

38. Forward Plan of Key Decisions

38.1 The Committee considered the Forward Plan of Key Decisions (copy appended to the signed minutes).

38.2 It was clarified that, regarding the decision 'Contract Arrangements Nursing Dementia Residential Care Beds', the beds are needed to maintain capacity levels, it was the contract that was coming to an end and needed to be renewed.

38.3 Resolved – that relating to the entry "Contract Award - Day Opportunities, Supported Employment and Volunteering Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities and/or Autism", more information on "co-production" to be provided.

39. Work Programme

39.1 The Committee considered its Work Programme.

39.2 Resolved – that the Committee requests: -

- An update on the closure of Zachary Merton Hospital in Rustington be brought to the Business Planning Group meeting on 7 February 2024
- The Business Planning Group to consider an update on the impact of the closures of Marjorie Cobby House and Shaw Day Services

- iii. More information to be provided on the reablement contract for people discharged from hospital

40. Date of Next Meeting

- 40.1 The next meeting of the Committee will be held on 6 March 2024 at 10.30 am at County Hall, Chichester.

The meeting ended at 12.56 pm

Chairman